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**BALLISTIC MISSILES FOREIGN EXPERTS
ROUNDTABLE REPORT**

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Château Laurier, Ottawa, Ontario

On March 30-31, 2000, nine ballistic missiles experts from Germany, Norway, Russia, and the United States met to discuss the impact of the National Missile Defense program proposed by the United States government on the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, and the relations of the United States with Canada, Russia, China, the European Union and the world.

The experts examined the option of a multilateral approach to more effective ballistic missile control, international monitoring, and early warning systems.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Canada can and should play a lead role in elaborating a multilateral action plan on ballistic missiles. Canada can:

- raise the profile of the issues involved;
- broaden the discussion to include key NATO countries (Germany, Norway, Netherlands, Denmark, etc.);
- work together with civil society to make a panel of scientific and civil society experts to develop a mature proposal on a multilateral approach to the ballistic missile problem;
- initiate outreach to China on the ballistic missile issue;
- initiate outreach and reassurance to Russia;
- engage the so-called "rogue" states i.e. North Korea, by addressing their security interests;
- as a NORAD partner, push the United States to address Russian needs and concerns including building on the US-Russian notification regime and reinforcing the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty;
- Canada should address both the US domestic political situation and public opinion regarding NMD.

The meeting was co-hosted by Steve Lee of the Canadian Centre for Foreign Policy Development and Ernie Regehr of Project Ploughshares at the University of Waterloo. Franklyn Griffiths, University of Toronto, and Peter Jones, Privy Council Office also participated as Canadian observers.

The experts were:

- John Steinbruner, Director of International Security Studies at the University of Maryland;
- Charles Ferguson, Federation of American Scientists;
- George Lewis, Security Studies Program, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT);
- Briton John Garnett at Defence Studies, King's College, London;
- German Jurgen Scheffran of Darmstadt University;
- Russian Taira Koybaeva at Utah State University;
- Norwegian Jorn Siljeholm at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT);
- Tom Graham, Second Chance Foundation; and
- Stephen Young from the Coalition to Reduce Nuclear Dangers.

Public Involvement

The experts asked Canada's government and civil society to generate greater public debate on NMD by actively pursuing alternative approaches to managing the ballistic missile threat. This can be done by:

- holding conferences and roundtables within NATO countries to stimulate informed public and expert discussion and initiatives on NMD;
- give attention to alternative diplomatic and political approaches that highlight the security concerns of so-called "rogue states" pursuing ballistic missile capability and their reasons for doing so; and
- convene a small working group of international experts to explore and begin to design a multilateral approach to missile early warning and surveillance.

Deployment Impact

The experts saw Canada, both its government and its civil society, to be in an excellent position to facilitate elements of the necessary international debate, and to initiate a process of study toward the elaboration of requirements for an effective multilateral missile early warning, control and monitoring system.

The experts emphasized that:

- even partial deployment of the United States' National Missile Defense system (NMD), whether it works or not, would escalate tensions between the United States, China and Russia,
- NMD deployment threatens to "decouple" the historic mutual defense link between the United States and Europe, creating an increasingly isolationist "Fortress America," apparently willing only to defend itself,
- Canada's endorsement of the NMD could have an adverse impact on our relations with China and Russia.,
- NMD would contribute to undermining the entire global arms control regime and could seriously contribute to new insecurity and results in offensive arms developments,
- NMD deployment will do extraordinary, long-term harm to the international security environment,

- the United States is moving toward deployment without the benefit of a thorough public debate and airing of the issues, and
- it is urgent that the voices of the international community be heard on NMD before the US acts.

Canada's role

- ▶ Canada could help build the alternative to NMD by putting "flesh on the bones" of a multilateral effort to control ballistic missiles;
- ▶ Canada is a key player in the National Missile Defense debate and a significant international influence with great leadership potential;
- ▶ technically or financially, Canada's role in a National Missile Defense system would be small, and even unnecessary; and
- ▶ if Canada endorsed the Americans' NMD, the United States would acquire a valuable ally, "moral legitimacy", and a distinct advantage in obliging support from other NATO member countries.

What's Next?

In October 2000, President Bill Clinton is expected to pronounce on whether to deploy or conduct more research into the National Missile Defense system. Presently, Clinton has not taken a position.

The participants created a list of short-, medium- and long term policy options and goals for Canada.

Short-Term Options (2000-2001)

- Publicly defend the value and need for the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty in speeches, statements, and those of others.
- Organize or sponsor an informal issue-discussion meeting with NATO officials and experts on the NBM in a retreat setting such as Banff, Alberta.
- Publicly and critically question and demystify the stigmatizing concept of rogue states.
- Bi-laterally or multilaterally (as appropriate) engage so-called rogue states who are known to have or to be developing ballistic missile capacity, such as Iran and North Korea.
- Using new technology, engage Canadian civil society in building a network for information exchange and debate to raise awareness of the seriousness and impact of the issue. Share more information on the issue with non-government organizations and journalists so they can have more informed discussions.
- Hold an in-depth experts meeting on space surveillance and/or the regulations of how space is used.
- Hold a meeting of commercial "space business" firms and leaders to discuss how militarization of space and the NMD will adversely affect commercial opportunities, especially in light of China's position.
- Establish a Canberra-style commission on "Cooperative Security in Space" and involve Russia and China.

- Engage scientists and technicians worldwide in a discussion on how to construct and elaborate a multilateral ballistic missile control regime.
- Discuss with China the potential for cooperation on a multilateral measures.
- Look for ways for Canada to reassure Russia indirectly in Track Two-style assistance on unrelated but important issues of Russian concern, such as disease control and circumpolar affairs.
- Encourage the US, EU and other countries to provide reassurance directly and indirectly, especially addressing Russia's grave economic position.
- Encourage the United States to develop an early-warning ballistic missile system based on ground radar, rather than NMD.
- Engage experts, civil society and officials in other NATO countries for the purpose of elaborating, examining, and encouraging informed public discourse on, the full range of relevant NMD issues, notably:
 - missile threat perception and risk analysis,
 - the technical challenges intrinsic to, and the true capabilities of, the currently proposed NMD option,
 - arms control implications of the NMD option, and
 - the elaboration of diplomatic, political and economic policy options or alternatives available for responding to the threat.
- Political engagement, in the company of other like-minded NATO states, with the "threat" states (including Russia, China, and North Korea):
 - to canvass Russia and China for their views on what may be required to develop a cooperative, rules-based approach to managing and reducing ballistic missile threats emerging from non-traditional sources (with a view to introducing those views more prominently into the debate that is slowly developing, or should be, within NATO),
 - to engage N. Korea, and other states with ballistic missile and weapons of mass destruction interests and ambitions, to better understand their own security needs/interests and to explore alternative means of pursuing legitimate security needs (the point being to "de-rogue" relations with such states);

Existing support for US-Russian **joint missile early warning**, and for **multilateral approaches to missile warning, surveillance and deployment regulations**, offers a context in which to pursue the management of the missile threat through the development of a multilateral regulatory regime and thus Canada should convene an experts panel to undertake a thorough and **systematic exploration of the possibilities and requirements for the development of multilateral arrangements¹** for:

- ballistic missile warning;
- ballistic missile launch notification;
- surveillance and monitoring of the pre-launch status of ballistic missiles;
- a missile control regime;

- a multilateral, rules-based system to regulate military activity in space, and
- similar cooperation in monitoring air defence systems.

Medium-Term Options (2000-2003)

- Bring attention to the UN Committee on Disarmament in the debate,
- Support the creation of an international, apolitical organization that can discuss the facts of issue, make reliable risk analysis and threat assessments,
- Promote no first-use ballistic missile policies through multilateral organizations such as NATO.
- Recognize regional security problems and the context of countries' insecurities,
- Expand and strengthen the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty,
- Negotiate and clarify multilaterally space regulations and reserve the use of space for commercial rather than military uses,
- Identify leaders for an organization which can advance ideas, agendas,
- Look for ways to build other tools to reduce the risk of confrontation, conflict and accident, such as de-alerting, reducing research and development, technological exchanges, missile test bans, international monitoring and surveillance, etc.

The **long-term goals** include demilitarization, the elimination of non-civilian ballistic missiles, and the elimination of nuclear weapons.

Threat

The experts acknowledged a genuine, two-fold ballistic missile threat:

- the most immediate and certainly most severe threat is in the deterioration of Russia's capacity to manage its existing strategic forces (declining faith in the capacity of its early warning system to detect attack leads Russia to increase its reliance on a high-alert, rapid response posture, thus heightening the dangers of miscalculation); and
- the proliferation of missile technology has the potential to destabilize the security environment in certain regions and, to a lesser degree, globally.

However, the threat of ballistic missile attack is declining:

- the 1999 US National Intelligence Estimate says that *in 15 years and in the absence of any political accommodations*, the US will face a ballistic missile threat from North Korea, Iran and Iraq in addition to Russia and China
- the primary threat will continue to be from Russia, although it will be much reduced, and
- the new threats such as North Korea, if they materialize, will be from very few missiles, which in turn will be capable of carrying much smaller payloads and will be much less accurate.

Discussion Quotes

"The U.S. doesn't need Canada. What the United States is really looking for is political support. They want Canada to help legitimate it and to help sell it to other countries."

– George Lewis, Security Studies Program, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)

"The Canadian decision is critical to other NATO countries. For now, they are completely undecided."

– Jurgen Scheffran

"It is bewildering to me that the United States cannot deter North Korea with its entire nuclear arsenal."

– John Garnett

"The Russians say, 'You pretend this threat is North Korea but we believe it's a threat for us. They will never believe it isn't against Russia.'" – Taira Koybaeva

Report by Peter Moore, Canadian Centre for Foreign Policy Development and Ernie Regehr, Project Ploughshares.

Appendix I

Towards a multilateral missile early warning and surveillance system (multilateral missile threat management system)

1. In cooperation with civil society, Canada should arrange for **the early convening of an international panel of experts** to begin to map out the **operational design** of a system that could give substance to the US-Russian agreement in principle on joint early warning, and, especially, to **consider multilateral approaches to missile threat management**.

2. **Why a multilateral approach** to ballistic missile threat management?²

2.1 John Steinbruner warns that the Russian-American nuclear deterrent system, that still operates and that is based primarily on nuclear weapons based on ballistic missiles, is fragile.

"The pre-emptive damage that the United States and NATO are capable of inflicting on Russian forces virtually precludes the comprehensive forms of retaliation envisaged by traditional deterrence doctrine and virtually compels reliance on rapid-reaction practices to assure even the most minimal deterrent standard."

Thus Russian forces are maintained on high alert, even though

"Russia cannot maintain its forces on rapid-reaction status without running an unreasonable risk of triggering an accidental, unauthorized or inadvertent engagement."

Russia's detection system involves a high degree of risk because its "glaring deficiencies" are in danger of confusing signals and inadvertently triggering a nuclear response to a false warning.

2.2 A joint warning and surveillance system would allow both states to have more confidence in their early warning and surveillance data and would facilitate them taking weapons off alert status. Eventually, says Steinbruner, China would be drawn into a system through which all three states would "reliably receive the surveillance and tracking data generated by the system." Furthermore, they would all receive it at the same time and would have the same capacity to interpret it.

2.3 Expanding the concept to include the multilateral sharing of information is the logical next step. "In order to be effective..., joint surveillance would have to be extended to the pre-launch conditions of all nuclear weapons delivery systems...", and, beyond, to all states with ballistic missile capacity or programs. Steinbruner's proposal is focussed on the immediate and pre-eminent danger of an unreliable Russian detection system, but the same basic idea and technology could be transformed into an effective response to non-traditional missile threats – bringing transparency to the status and capability of such missile programs.

² The basic idea, and following quotes, are from John Steinbruner's article in the November 1999 issue of *Arms Control Today*, "National Missile Defense: Collision in Progress."

3. The US and joint early warning:

3.1 The basic principle of joint early warning was accepted by the United States and Russia at their Moscow summit meeting in September 1998, when they agreed to establish a joint USA-Russia Missile Early Warning Centre and an international system to provide notification of intended missile launches.

4. Canada and multilateral missile early warning and surveillance:

4.1 Canada has expressed its support of the principle and its implementation in several ways:

- In its response to the SCFAIT report on nuclear issues, DFAIT reported that "Canadian officials have encouraged the USA to share information with Russia and to multilateralise this initiative;"

- the same report indicated that NORAD could be one vehicle for such a multilateral system;³

- Canada has also proposed that the Geneva-based Conference on Disarmament create a committee on outer space with a mandate to negotiate a convention for the non-weaponization of space.⁴ Canada has also noted that an international system for launch notification could also be addressed by this committee.

Currently these are general ideas which need to be converted into a credible concept and a multilateral issue.

5. The feasibility of a multilateral system:

5.1 The experts point out that the assets needed for such a system (e.g. radars) are already globally distributed (with locations in Canada, UK, Norway, etc.???)

5.2 The missile threat is not relevant only to the United States:

- it is not only an American homeland defence issue,

- neither is it strictly and US-Russian bilateral issue,

- rather, it is central to the stability of the international strategic environment.

5.3. Similarly, the ABM Treaty is central to strategic stability and many experts advised that the time is now ripe to begin discussions related to redesigning the ABM treaty as a multilateral instrument.

5.3 Air surveillance and air defence similarly need multilateral cooperation.

6. **Canada** already has sufficient standing in ballistic missile and space issues to have a **political mandate** to offer international leadership or encouragement:

6.1 Through NORAD Canada is already involved in related bilateral US-Russian security issues.

³ Recommendation 7, April 1999 "Government Response to the Recommendations of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade on Canada's Nuclear Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Policy."

⁴ "Proposal concerning CD action on outer space," *Conference on Disarmament* (CD/1569, Feb. 4/99).

6.2 As already noted, Canada has an articulated policy in support of multilateralising missile early warning and surveillance.

6.3 Canada has also proposed measures related to the "non-weaponization" of space at the CD.

6.4 The Department of National Defence reports ongoing "research and consultation with the United States and other like-minded nations" on ballistic missile defence. It adds that there will continue to be "ongoing consultations with the U.S. for the specific purpose of determining what a future BMD system might entail."

6.5 Along with all other states, Canada has an obvious stake in maintaining a strategic environment of maximum stability.

7. The next steps:

7.1 The experts warned that if multilateral missile early warning and surveillance are approached the wrong way, a failed system or attempt could further destabilize the international strategic security environment. An effective system requires the full sharing of real, complete, reliable, and identical information in real time.

7.2 The various elements of such a system are not yet sufficiently understood to introduce them into direct political discussions, but the mobilizing of experts to seriously exploring the basic components and requirements of such a system would yield major benefits on two counts:

- the fact of serious exploration of the issue would yield political support for the basic idea that there are credible ways of addressing the ballistic missile threat by means other than ballistic missile defence; and

- the work of international experts would begin the process of assembling the basic information and analysis needed to develop a more mature proposal available for political attention.

7.3 The **experts thus encouraged Canada to work with civil society to assemble a panel of experts** for the purpose of developing a more mature proposal:

- the panel should include experts in:

- technology,

- relevant national and international laws, and

- strategic and regional security issues.

7.4 Issues addressed should include the **technical, legal, and security** elements of:

- ballistic missile warning,

- ballistic missile launch notification,

- surveillance and monitoring of the pre-launch status of ballistic missiles,

- a missile control regime,

- a multilateral, rules-based system to regulate military activity in space, and

- similar cooperation in monitoring air defence systems.

7.5 The panel should begin its work as soon as possible to demonstrate that alternatives to NMD are being actively pursued.